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SUBJECT: H1N1 Update: 22,110 Cases; Second Death Reported

REF: Berlin 1236 and previous

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: The number of confirmed H1N1 infections in Germany rose by 507 cases to 22,110 on October 8. RKI has announced the death of a 5-year old boy from Munich (Bavaria) who had been infected with H1N1. Germany hopes to start its H1N1 vaccination program at the end of October. END SUMMARY

¶2. (U) At its October 8 press briefing, the National Reference Center for Influenza at the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) confirmed a total of 507 new (laboratory and non-laboratory) H1N1 cases in Germany since October 7, increasing the total number of H1N1 cases to 22,110. NRW remains the German state with the highest number of confirmed virus cases with a total of 5,987, followed by Bavaria (3,543) and Baden-Wuerttemberg (3,246).

Second German H1N1 Death

¶3. (U) A 5-year old boy from Munich (Bavaria) is the second person infected with H1N1 to die in Germany. The boy was considered to be a "risk patient" and had serious underlying health conditions, particularly pneumonia, which led to his death on October 5. According to RKI, H1N1 was found in his blood. No information is currently available as to where the boy might have contracted H1N1.

H1N1 Vaccination to Start in Late October

¶4. (U) At an October 8 briefing hosted by the Federal German Ministry of Health, officials stated that the H1N1 vaccination plan for Germany is still under discussion. As previously announced, Germany's proposed strategy is to vaccinate three groups of people first: health care workers, people with underlying health conditions, and pregnant women. Depending on the epidemiological situation, Germany will then evaluate if other groups should be vaccinated. Foreign residents living in Germany will receive the vaccination; however, foreign tourists in Germany should get vaccinated in their home country. Germany hopes to begin the H1N1 vaccination program at the end of October. Given the reluctance of Germans to receive the H1N1 vaccine, RKI does not expect a run

on the vaccine this fall. The distribution of the H1N1 vaccine to the public will differ among the federal states, but mainly will occur through the public health service.

¶5. (U) Considering the mild course of the H1N1 virus in Germany, RKI expects fewer deaths to occur from H1N1 than from seasonal influenza. As reported in REF, between 8,000 to 11,000 patients die every year from seasonal influenza in Germany.

Pandemic Influenza Working Group

¶6. (U) A core group of Mission Germany's Pandemic Influenza Working Group met on October 7 to review the current H1N1 situation in Germany. Mission Germany remains at tripwire two, which indicates clusters of infection with only localized human-to-human transmission. All sections continue to implement the Department's recommended preparations for a potential increase in cases this fall.

MURPHY